

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**  
**ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD**  
**MARCH 2007**

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**CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION**

- Blair field office (FO) has 11 conservation applications for spring; 4 are completed and paid; 4 are completed and waiting on paperwork; 3 are approved and being built.
- Blair FO, Neil Jensen RC, completed 5 Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determinations and 2 wetland determinations.
- The following tree orders have been received for spring 2007 plant: Blair 7,700 trees; Omaha 5,775 trees; Dakota City 6,000 trees.
- The District has paid 20 landowners' \$96,761.64 cost share through the 2007 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program.
- Tekamah FO completed 8 conservation plan revisions and an additional 15 plan revision requests are pending.
- Tekamah FO completed 3 terrace projects with Sylvia Thomas, Technical Service Provider (TSP), providing the layout assistance.
- Walthill FO received 6 Conservation Assistance Plan (CAP) projects for spring and 6 HEL determination requests.
- Evelyn Maslonka, NRD Tekamah, completed 76 reconstitutions and folder changes through the month of March.
- Tekamah FO completed 8 HEL determinations with 5 of those requiring field visits; they also completed a wetland determination and a Minimal Effect Agreement that allows the producer to conduct maintenance.
- Tekamah FO completed 1 CRP payment for grass seeding.
- Dakota County completed 5 HEL determinations, revised conservation plans on 1,025 acres of cropland and completed the survey work for a grade stabilization structure.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)**

- Washington County had 38 applications approved for EQIP funding for approximately \$485,000. Practices include water conservation on irrigated ground, pasture improvement, terrace systems, grade stabilization structures and Ag Waste systems. Blair FO staff are currently writing contracts and getting landowner signatures.
- Omaha FO completed 3 EQIP payments and 3 modifications.
- Walthill FO staff mailed 6 nutrient management and waste utilization reminder letters to EQIP contract holders, completed 8 waterway designs and completed payments on 3 EQIP contracts.
- Walthill FO has 3 EQIP projects planned for spring: 1 waterway and 2 terraces. Walthill has 10 EQIP applications approved for funding.
- Dakota County had 7 EQIP applications approved which include a livestock manure facility, an irrigation conversion project and 5 pasture management projects. A grade stabilization structure is included in one of the EQIP pasture projects.

**WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)**

**WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)**

- Tekamah FO staff has been involved with coordinating meetings between the surveyors and landowners prior to the boundary survey being completed.
- Tekamah FO continues to assist producers with gathering information that has been requested from the Wetland Assistance Team and the NRCS State Office.

- Sylvia Thomas, TSP, has been working with both the Omaha and Winnebago Tribes to assist with the WRP/WREP projects that are being completed on the Tribal Lands.
- Evelyn Maslonka, NRD Tekamah, has been keeping ahead of the WRP/WREP correspondence letter documentation in the case files.

### **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)**

#### **CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)**

- Blair FO completed 1 contract for continuous CRP field border.
- Omaha FO completed 1 contract revision to allow prescribed burning followed by inter-seeding of legumes on approximately 60 acres.
- Tekamah FO is completing a preliminary quantity survey for a CRP wetland excavation; a preliminary design of the site was completed.
- Dakota County completed a contract for a 2.3 acre CCRP field windbreak.

### **SILVER CREEK WATERSHED**

- Justin Linder and Andy Bohnenkamp, NRCS Tekamah, worked with Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, and Lee Appleby, Olsson Associates, to follow up with seeding a CRP contract that was impacted during construction of Site 36.

### **PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED**

- Additional geological investigation drill work is scheduled for Site 15 this spring.

### **WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP)**

- Dakota County had a WHIP application for 11 acres of brush management, native grass restoration and timber stand improvement approved.

### **INFORMATION/EDUCATION**

- The Dakota County FO staff provided news items for the NRD share page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of March. Articles included: Remember Conservation When Making Crop Planting Decisions, Web Soil Survey Available for Public Use, Students Attend Aquafest, and Household Hazardous Waste Collections Scheduled. Photos with captions were included of Aquafest participants at Wayne, P-MRNRD website offerings, and a FEMA Flood Insurance Map update meeting held at the Natural Resources Center in Dakota City.
- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, is assisting Washington County Chapter of Pheasants Forever with getting sponsors and ticket sales for their annual fund raising dinner and auction scheduled for April 14, 2007.

### **DISTRICT PROGRAMS**

- Terry Schumacher, Blair NRD, assisted Washington County Rural Water staff with meter readings.
- Walthill NRD staff has assessed erosion damage to Elk and Pigeon Creek weirs.

### **TRAINING/MEETINGS**

- Omaha NRCS and Ralph Puls, NRD, participated in the Farm Service Agency (FSA) annual weed meeting.
- John Winkler, Ralph Puls and Dick Sklenar met with NRCS/NRD staff at each field office (Blair, Tekamah, Walthill and Dakota City).
- NRD and NRCS FO staff from Walthill, Tekamah, Blair and Omaha assisted with each agency's booth at the Triumph of Ag show at the Qwest Convention Center in Omaha.
- Justin Linder, NRCS Tekamah, attended the Advanced Prescribed Burn training in Broken Bow.

- Evelyn Maslonka and Sylvia Thomas, Tekamah, completed the Computer Security and Privacy Training courses.
- Dakota City staff attended the following meetings/teleconference: Kelly Fravel – Aquafest program for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Wayne on March 6; Neil Stockfleth – Northwest Iowa Notill Conference on March 13; Sam Thomas took part in a statewide engineering teleconference on March 20.
- Sam Thomas, NRCS Dakota City, received certification as a journeyman level conservation planner on March 29.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, April 10, 2007